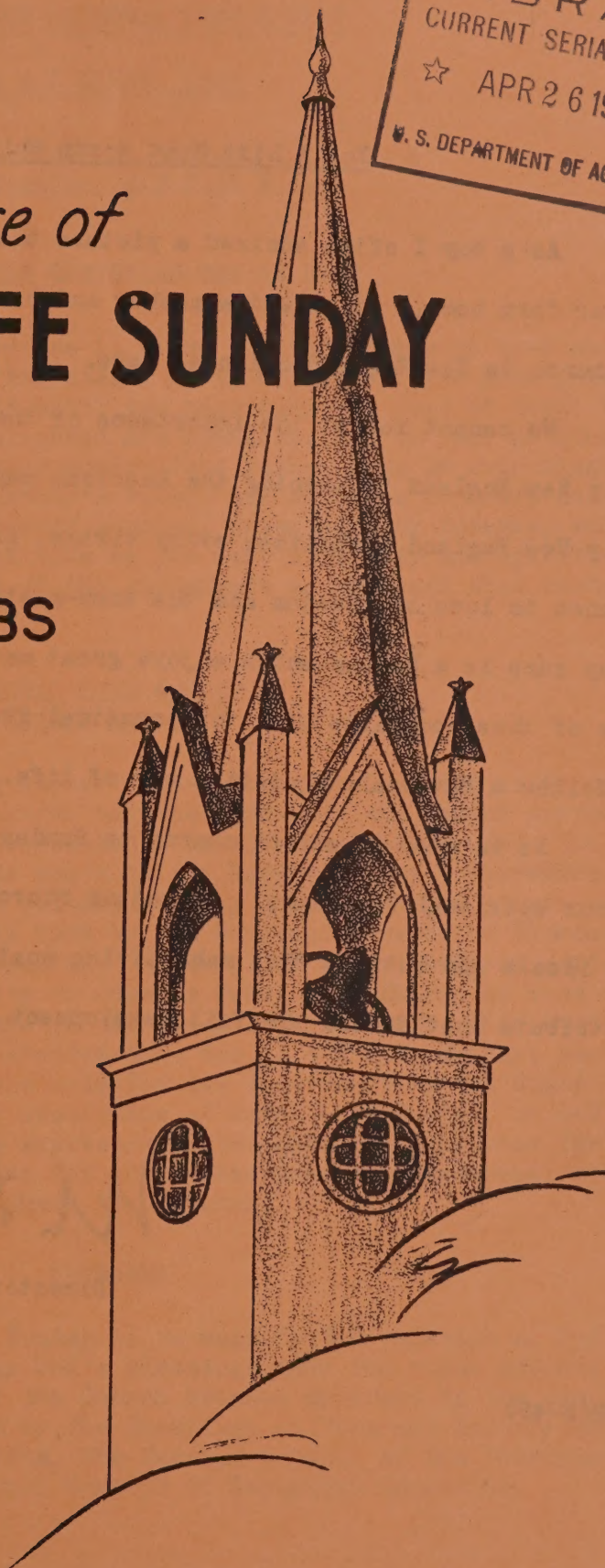
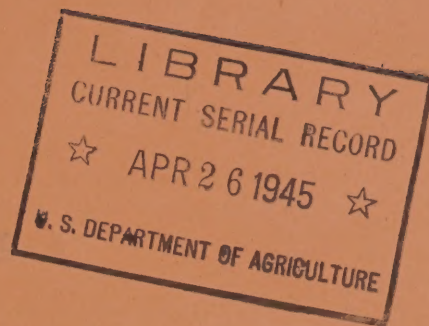


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Observance of
RURAL LIFE SUNDAY

BY
4-H CLUBS
1945

EXTENSION SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
AND STATE AGRI-
CULTURAL COLLEGES
COOPERATING



APR 13 1945

For A Life Most Worth While

As a boy I often admired a picture that hung from the walls of our farm home. It showed a mother and her children on their way to church in New England colonial days.

We cannot forget the importance of the Christian ideals of early New England in shaping the American way of life. Church-going early New England symbolizes every virtue, from patience and perseverance to love of freedom and the town-meeting type of democracy. Today ours is a Nation which enjoys great material blessings. But none of these compares with the practical freedom granted all of us to follow a rational, Christian way of life.

It is good to attend church on Sunday and there to be reminded of our spiritual blessings. Attending church inspires us to follow the ideals and motives that make living most worth while and that contribute most toward the full development of our individual selves.

M. L. Wilson

Director of Extension Work

OBSERVANCE OF RURAL LIFE SUNDAY

BY 4-H CLUBS, 1945

Gertrude L. Warren
Organization, 4-H Club Work

THEME: THE CHRISTIAN WAY OF LIFE

"To be glad of life, because it gives you the chance to love and to work and to play and to look up at the stars; to be contented with your possessions, but not satisfied with yourself until you have made the best of them; to despise nothing in the world except falsehood and meanness, and to fear nothing except cowardice; to be governed by your admirations rather than by your disgusts; to covet nothing that is your neighbor's except his kindness of heart and gentleness of manners; to think seldom of your enemies, often of your friends, and everyday of Christ; and to spend as much time as you can, with body and spirit, in God's out-of-doors -- these are some of the guideposts on the path that leads to the Christian way of life."

RURAL LIFE SUNDAY ORIGIN AND DATE

Each year an increasing number of 4-H Clubs are setting aside one Sunday when 4-H Club members attend church together and when the church service is especially planned for such an occasion. Rural Life Sunday occurs the fifth Sunday after Easter, having its roots in the Rogation days. Therefore, this year Rural Life Sunday will be observed on May 6 by those who adhere strictly to the precedent established in 1929 by the National Council of Churches when Rural Life Sunday was first observed. However, it may prove more satisfactory for the 4-H Clubs of a community to observe Rural Life Sunday on some other Sunday in May or June when there is the least conflict with other events. It may prove more appropriate to observe this day as 4-H Club Sunday, particularly if special recognition plans are made for its observance by the State 4-H Club staff. In connection with any observance of Rural Life Sunday, or 4-H Club Sunday, appreciation should be expressed to the National Committee for Cooperation in Character Education for all it has done in supporting this effort on the part of 4-H Clubs throughout the country.

PURPOSES

"Purpose of Rural Life Sunday is to magnify the relation of God and man in food production, and to pray God's blessings upon the human efforts to prepare for a crop. The importance of the Church becomes apparent by the way it interprets and inspires," as stated by The Committee on Town and Country of the Home Missions Council of North America, The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, and The International Council of Religious Education.

In connection with the observance of 4-H Club Sunday, attention is called to the statement of Dr. E. H. Shinn, "Young people should be encouraged to identify themselves with those institutions that stand for the high ideals of a community, such as the church, the school, and other social organizations that lead to the fuller, all-round development of all those who participate. The observance of 4-H Club Sunday provides an opportunity for 4-H Club members to make a start in this direction, particularly in the development of the Heart H. They might well use this occasion to discuss their own responsibilities to the church of their choice. These might be tabulated and then discussed in their entirety - especially in connection with this year's theme, 'The Christian Way of Life.'"

A SUGGESTIVE APPEAL TO 4-H MEMBERS
BY A STATE CLUB LEADER

"Roland H. Bainton begins his book, 'The Church of Our Fathers,' with these two paragraphs:

"The Church is our spiritual home. In every village and town the skyline is marked by the slender spire or the square tower of the church. In Europe and America the Church has been the greatest force in shaping the world in which we live. Universities, schools and colleges, hospitals and asylums, better prisons, kinder laws, the ending of slavery and duelling and the attempt to end war and bring in the brotherhood of man, all these have been in a large measure the work of the Church.

"The Church is something like a tree whose limbs branch off--some small, some large; some straight, some twisted; and whose leaves in the fall may be still mostly green with patches here and there of gold and flame. Even so the Church has many branches and leaves differing as to the form of the building, the dress of the clergy, the services and beliefs. Some spires are tipped with crosses and some with weather vanes. Some churches give the altar a central position in front, and some the pulpit. In some the minister wears robes of many colors, in others only a plain suit. The Quakers have no altars and no pulpits and no minister. Yet all have one God, one Master, and one Spirit.'

"In these trying times we need something more than money, food, clothing, and shelter. These things are all valuable if rightly used, but these are really not the things our boys are dying for. Yes, every good-loyal 4-H Club member will do the best project work he can, produce and conserve food and material to the utmost. But this 4-H Club member will be doing greater and more lasting work if he will attach himself to some branch of the church, and actively participate in developing in himself, and others, that way of life described long ago by a prophet who said: 'Do justly, love mercy, walk humbly with thy God.' If we practice this we will really be serving 'God and Country.'"

- C. H. Hartley
State Club Leader, W. Va.

TYPES OF OBSERVANCE OF 4-H CLUB SUNDAY
BY 4-H CLUBS IN 1944

Members of 4-H Clubs throughout the United States attended the church of their choice.

Some 4-H Clubs went in a body to a combined service in a central church.

Others held services in local halls.

Many conducted special services during Sunday school hour.

A number conducted special services in some scenic setting.

According to reports, a number also conducted special 4-H sunrise or 4-H sunset services.

In some churches, 4-H members in cooperation with the minister had charge of the entire church service in the evening or afternoon.

Often 4-H members were asked by ministers to make certain desirable contributions to the service.

SUGGESTIVE WAYS OF PARTICIPATION IN CHURCH SERVICES
BY CLUB MEMBERS

Make careful plans to suit local conditions.

Select a Sunday when there is the least conflict with other events.

Explain fully the meaning of 4-H Club Sunday and plans for the day to local ministers or church officers.

Furnish information about 4-H Club work to ministers for inclusion in sermon.

Plan county-wide observance of 4-H Club Sunday, if possible.

Hold a combined service in a central church or hall or observe in some other way as was done in 1944.

Invite parents, neighbors, and other friends to attend.

Decorate the church with plants and flowers.

Have a 4-H Club committee in uniform to welcome people at the door of the church.

Take charge of ushering.

Attend church as a group and wear membership pins, uniforms, or some special emblem made for the occasion.

Give talks; read poems, creeds, pledges, prayers, scriptures; contribute special musical numbers.

RESPONSIVE READING

Minister or Club President:

Our heavenly Father Who art ever present with Thy people, we lift up our hearts unto Thee in intercession for the workers of Thy world. For the multitudes of the earth who till the soil and tend the flocks; for fishers of the sea; for woodsmen and miners; for craftsmen and those who toil at lathe or bench or marketplace.

People or Club Members:

We lift up our hearts unto Thee, O Lord.

Minister or Club President:

For refugees and migrants and the homeless of the earth; for fatherless children and widowed mothers; for soldiers and sailors scattered over the world in strange and hard places; for the wounded and dying; for those who suffer for conscience sake; for the victims of hatred and prejudice.

People or Club Members:

We lift up our hearts unto Thee, O Lord.

Minister or Club President:

That all the world may learn to love Thee as Father and to follow after Thy ways as Thy children; that the nations of the world may learn justice and mercy and peace, and the end of selfish greed and war; that we may do Thy will to serve Thee in our places striving for Thy kingdom in the world.

People or Club Members:

We lift up our hearts unto Thee, O Lord.

Minister or Club President:

That the Church of Jesus Christ may be strong, filled with the faith and joy of Thy people; that the church may serve Thee throughout the whole world shedding light in the darkness; that the churches of the countryside and the church in this place may be reborn with the knowledge of a great commission from Thee.

People or Club Members:

We lift up our hearts unto Thee, O Lord.

4-H CLUB PRAYER

Thou Eternal Spirit of Life, the Heavens declare Thy glory and the fields and woods reveal Thy providing care. Thou art our Father.

As the stars in their courses make known Thy power, so do the beauties in flower and bird show the provisions for our pleasures and suggest the values of all created things. We would know how to use and how to protect and conserve these values which are in Thy creation. May Thy purposes not be defeated by our carelessness but rather increased by our appreciation.

We thank Thee for all Thy provisions for human happiness, for the love of home and friends and for all those influences which turn work into pleasure and make of what might have been life's monotonies a bright song. We pray that Thy spirit may govern us in all our activities and all our pleasures and social contacts, and in such manner that we may spend our days in harmony with Thy holy will and our eternal well-being. Help us to feel that all legitimate work is holy, and in it may we constantly come to a clearer understanding and consciousness of the Divine Presence. May we so live that Thy face will always be visible, even as to the pure in heart.

We pray for an ever-increasing understanding of men, women, boys, and girls throughout our war-torn world. May we do our full part unceasingly in helping to win the war and to bring about a just and lasting peace. And when our boys and girls now in the armed forces return, may we give fully of ourselves in helping them to happily adjust themselves mentally, socially, and spiritually to the life of their own homes and communities. In all this, may we exercise that power of initiative which can take advantage of situations and conquer difficulties. May we come to understand that the development of this initiative is a sacred duty and that in using it we are working together with Thee. We also pray for that life consciousness which looks beyond the world we now see and beholds our fulfillment in a greater sphere. As we live, in time may we come more and more to feel the sense of eternity and to make our plans accordingly.

In our 4-H Club work, give us the power to be thankful for our many varied experiences. May we rejoice with those who have won recognition and be sharers in the satisfactions that come from doing a worth-while piece of work. Where there have been disappointments, may they carry with them some lesson which will be of future advantage. If there has been any experience we should forget, give us the power and grace to cast it from our minds, but let the aroma of the pleasant carry back to our homes and clubs. We pray Thy favor on our club leaders and associates, on our county extension agents, and may our local leaders, who have given so freely and unselfishly of their time, feel that they have been doing Thy service. As we have freely received, may we be prepared to pass on that which we have gained; to serve our communities as we have been served. May we see Jesus in our everyday contacts and may He become the pattern of our lives. Amen.

CANDLE-LIGHTING SERVICE

Honoring

MEN IN THE SERVICE

Written by Marthane J. Gardner
for Rural Life Sunday Program

It is an old colonial custom to place a lighted candle in the window to guide absent loved ones home. Tonight I would like to revive that custom and place in the windows of our hearts three candles to guide our loved ones back to us.

Edith Wharton has said, "There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it." Let us make our candles a light-house on the hill....a beacon to guide our boys through the darkness and peril of war.

The first candle that we will light will be the light of faith. (At this point a white candle is lighted.) Faith is that divine spark struck from the white anvil of God. We will light our candle of Faith with our love and keep it flaming brightly with hope and courage. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen." Nothing in life.... save perhaps love is more powerful and wonderful than Faith. It is a dynamic force which can neither be weighed nor measured....but it can be and is tested in the crucible of life and is found to be more precious than gold, stronger and more durable than steel and more powerful and far-reaching than electricity.

Sir Owen Seaman has this to say....

"Ye that have faith to look with fearless eyes
Beyond the tragedy of a world at strife,
And trust that out of night and death shall rise
The dawn of ampler life;
Rejoice, whatever anguish rend your heart,
That God has given you for a priceless dower,
To live in these great times and have your part
In Freedom's crowning hour;
That you may tell your sons who see the light
High in the heavens--their heritage to take--
'I saw the powers of Darkness put to flight,
I saw the Morning break.'"

And now, with our flame of faith, let us light the blue candle of prayer (Light candle with candle of faith) and let its flame waft heavenward to carry our message to God on High. "Our Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy name....And lead them not into temptation but deliver them from evil....for Thine is the power and the glory, forever, Amen." "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed....the motion of a hidden fire that trembles

in the breast." These are the beautiful words found in our song book. Let us keep our fire which is hidden within us, burning brightly. We are told that every time we pray, if our prayer is sincere, there will be a new feeling and new meaning in it, which will give us fresh courage, and we will understand that prayer is an education. Let us remember...."There are no accidents with God."

And, lighted from our candles of faith and prayer, (Light third candle with the blue candle of prayer) the red candle of courage will burn brightly in the night. In the Bible we are told...."Be strong and of a good courage.... be not afraid....neither be thou dismayed....for the Lord, Thy God, is with Thee whithersoever thou goest."

Stevenson put into words a prayer for us. "Give us grace and strength to forbear and to persevere. Give us courage and gaiety and the quiet mind, spare to us our friends, soften to us our enemies."

And so, we have three candles to keep aflame - the candles of Faith and Prayer and Courage. We are keepers of the Light. We must not fail.

Let us bow our heads in a minute of silent prayer for our country and for those who are so gallantly defending it.

SOME SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS FOR USE IN OBSERVANCE OF RURAL LIFE SUNDAY

"And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the years: Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown! And he replied: Go out into the darkness and put thine hand into the Hand of God. That shall be to thee better than light and safer than a known way."

- M. Louise Haskins

"As you think, you travel; and as you love, you attract. You are today where your thoughts have brought you; you will be tomorrow where your thoughts take you. You can not escape the results of your thoughts, but you can endure and learn, can accept and be glad. You will realize the vision, (not the idle wish), of your heart, be it base or beautiful, or a mixture of both, for you will always gravitate towards that which you, secretly, most love. Into your hands will be placed the exact result of your thoughts; you will receive that which you earn; no more, no less. Whatever your present environment may be, you will fall, remain, or rise with your thoughts, your vision, your ideal. You will become as small as your controlling desire; as great as your dominant aspiration. Altogether, you will be able to attain the intended fulfillment of your being to the degree that you develop in accordance with the Christian way of life."

"Too much stress cannot be placed upon the importance of reverence. No one can be truly great who is not reverent. Reverence to God, to man, and to life itself should be a part of the character of every boy and girl."

- Dr. Thomas C. Romney

"Here is a force which history clearly teaches has been the greatest power in the development of men....Yet we have merely been playing with it and have never seriously studied it as we have the physical forces. Some day people will learn that material things do not bring happiness, and are of little use in making men and women creative and powerful. Then the scientists of the world will turn their laboratories over to the study of prayer, and the spiritual forces which as yet have hardly been scratched."

- Dr. Steinmetz

"Rather like a very plain wire grown incandescent, Lincoln shone with what he came to stand for. He achieved a personal suggestiveness that is one of the marvels of our history. Think of him and see how inevitably you are reminded of magnanimity and patience and steadfastness under strain and devotion to the nation's unity and love of liberty and deepening faith and spiritual life! He came to stand for those things which man must love or else perish. And so, plain man though he was, he achieved an undying name."

- Harry Emerson Fosdick

"Never in the history of the world has there been a time when forces of evil were so definitely aligned against the forces of good as in the present world conflict. We all need spiritual nourishment now more than ever. We need religion, which is collective, not national. The constitutions of the world and of human beings are alike; there always is so much evil and sin. Jesus never promised His followers immunity from suffering. He merely shows us how to have courage, a great heart and serenity to overcome suffering."

- Dr. William Lyon Phelps
Professor Emeritus, Yale

"We have not gone into this war because of brick and mortar, trade and commerce, oil fields and rubber plantations, national honor and lust for revenge. We have gone into it because this war is a burning fiery furnace which threatened precious cultures with extinction; because mad men have turned the wheels of progress into reverse gear by making their appeals to physical force and violence. This solemn time in history constitutes the dividing line between what America was and what she may become, and the unity that is needed is a unity born of an overwhelming conviction that the future of America and of the world will be better than the past. Americans will not believe this unless they believe sincerely that the peace is to be based on education, justice, morality and religion."

- Daniel L. Marsh
President, Boston University

"Christian faith inspires the Christian way of life. Its central principle is love of God and love of fellow-men. It seeks to bring into fellowship all mankind, for all--of whatever race or nation--are children of the One God."

- International Council of
Religious Education

FAITH OF OUR FATHERS--

It led their footsteps across the sea to these shores...
It filled them with zeal to seek liberty of worship here...
It animated them with the pioneer spirit to till the soil, to
penetrate the forest primeval, to set up their homesteads,
and to follow callings of their choice...
It built the log cabins in the wilderness and the sod huts on
the prairie...
It brought forth the little red schoolhouse and the little white
church in the dale...
It caused the countryside to flourish, the villages to spring up,
and the cities to grow...
It gave us a Washington and a Lincoln, a Valley Forge and a
Gettysburg...
It bestowed on our land the ideals of democracy, the grace of
freedom, the majesty of law, the diadem of justice, the
sceptre of righteousness, and the love of peace...
Faith of our fathers, live and grow in our hearts and in the
hearts of our children and children's children; keep us
fit to defend our land against all evil, oppression, and
unrighteousness; and make us worthy to receive the crown
of ultimate victory and the blessing of enduring peace and
concord!

Milking Shorthorn Journal
July 1944

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and
to the Republic for which it stands; one nation, indivisible; with liberty
and justice for all.

PLEDGE TO THE CHRISTIAN FLAG

I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag, and to the Saviour for
whose Kingdom it stands, one brotherhood, uniting all mankind in service
and love.

THE SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE IN THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE

Reminders to 4-H Club Members in the Observance of Rural Life Sunday

The first act of the Pilgrim Fathers after landing on Plymouth Rock in 1620 was thanksgiving and prayer.

Tablets mark the pews rented and occupied by George Washington in churches in Virginia and New York.

"In God We Trust" is engraved on the coins of this Nation.

The national Congress and the State legislatures open their sessions with prayer.

The official documents of American history. . . affirm and reaffirm that this is a religious Nation.

- United States Supreme Court decision

The churches are the greatest influence in this world of ours to overcome the present tendency toward greed.

- Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

A churchless community, a community where men have abandoned and scoffed at or ignored their religious needs, is a community on rapid downgrade.

- Theodore Roosevelt.

The older I grow, the more certain I am that morality is dependent upon the spread of religious conviction in the government and civilization of this country.

- William Howard Taft.

Our civilization cannot survive materially unless it be redeemed spiritually.

- Woodrow Wilson.

The strength of a country is the strength of its religious convictions.

- Calvin Coolidge.

Our churches and religious institutions are indispensable stabilizing factors in our civilization.

- Herbert Hoover.

THE WORKS OF HIM

Within recent weeks a man and a woman just returned from the war zones were interviewed over radio networks. The man was a war correspondent, the woman a released prisoner-of-war. Both had undergone harrowing experiences, besides observing at first hand the privations and hardships of others. So stirring were their stories that listeners felt each interviewer was echoing their own deepest wish when asking, "What is there that we at home may do to help?" War correspondent and released prisoner-of-war replied in effect: "Whatever you are doing now, do better."

This should at once become a part of every Christian's creed: "Whatever I am doing now, by God's help I will do better."

If what we are doing is what God would have us do, our daily occupation presents no difficulty that cannot be solved in the light of the teaching and example of our Savior. Jesus was Himself a workman. Sir Wilfred Grenfell, of Labrador fame, once said he was sure that when Christ made doors and windows in Nazareth, they did not jam and misfit.

Sound, honest workmanship is the Christian's trade mark. Rufus M. Jones, the eminent Quaker, tells of watching a country shoemaker "stitching and pegging his faith and love of truth into a little shoe for some unknown child...who was to have an honest shoe."

Our faith and love of eternal Truth should inspire whatever we do, whether our work be of the hands or the mind or the heart. If these things matter so much in secular tasks, how much more important we should consider them in our work for the spiritual betterment of mankind! We read of the strong feeling of responsibility shared by raft and parachute makers. The lives of men, they say, depend upon their own precision and craftsmanship. They dare not be slipshod.

For each of us the touchstone of service must be that specified by Christ Himself when He said, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me."

